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10/777,655	02/13/2004	Young Jac Jeon	0465-1148P	5625

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EXAMINER

MADAMBA, GLENFORD J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2151

DATE MAILED: 05/19/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/777,655	JEON, YOUNG JAE	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Glenford Madamba	2151	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 March 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-31 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-31 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1-6, 9-13, 15-23, 25-26, 28-29, and 31 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Terada et al (hereinafter Terada), U.S. Patent US 6,167,046.

3. As per Claim 1, Terada discloses a home network system [col 2, lines 4-15] [Figure 1] comprising:

at least one slave device 31-36 [Fig. 1]; and

a master device 31-36 (e.g., control apparatus) [col 1, lines 21-57] operatively connected to the *at least one* slave device, the master device comprising:

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a microprocessor 38 [Fig. 2] operatively connected 37 to the *at least one* slave device

for repeatedly sending a status request signal to the slave device and receiving one or more response signals from the *at least one* slave device [col 2, lines 16-44];

a memory coupled to the microprocessor 83 (Figure 2) for constructing an operation history database C4 (Fig. 7B) [col 1, lines 40-57] [col 14, line 21 – col 15, line 33] by *cumulatively* storing operation status data of the *at least one* slave device included in each response signal **214** (Figure 4 p12, lines 23-25), wherein the microprocessor extracts data from the operation history database when a history inquiry request is received from a user [col 1, lines 40-57] [col 14, line 21 – col 15, line 33]; and

a display unit 97 coupled to the microprocessor for displaying the extracted operation history data **C4** (Figure 8A)

wherein the operation status data includes data related to specific functions performed by the at least one slave device [Abstract] [col 2, lines 17-49].

Claim 9 and 15 are also thus rejected using the same rationale discussed above for Claim 1 as the claims differ only by their statutory category.

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4. As per Claim 2, Terada discloses the home network system of claim 1, wherein the microprocessor identifies the at least one slave device by checking *an identification (ID) of the at least one slave device* (Fig. 5).

Claim 16 is also rejected using the same reason discussed above for Claim 2 as the claims differ only by their statutory category.

5. As per Claim 3, Terada discloses the home network system of claim 1, wherein the displayed operation history data includes a list of operations or events performed by *the* slave device during a predetermined period of time (Fig. 7A, 7B & 7C).

6. As per Claim 4, Terada discloses the home network system of claim 1, wherein the history inquiry request received from the user *includes a user selection of a period of time*, and the displayed operation history data includes a list of operations or events performed by *each of the at least one slave device* during the selected period of time (Fig. 7A, 7B & 7C).

7. As per Claim 5, Terada discloses the home network system of claim 1, wherein the operation status data included in each response signal includes information indicating initiation or completion of an operation and a corresponding time of the initiation or completion (Figure 7B & 8B).

Claims 19, and 20 are also rejected using the same justification provided for Claim 5 as they cite the same claim limitations as Claim 5.

8. As per Claim 6, Terada discloses the home network system of claim 1, wherein the master device (e.g., controlling apparatus) is any one of a television (TV) receiver **32**, a refrigerator having a display panel 35, a personal computer (PC), and a personal data assistant (PDA) device [col 1, lines 40-57] (Fig. 1).

9. As per Claim 11, Terada discloses the television (TV) receiver of claim 9, wherein the displayed operation history data includes a list of operations or events performed by one or more of the plurality of *slave devices* during a predetermined period of time (Figure 5, 7A, 7B, & 7C & 8B).

Claim 17 is also rejected using the same justification provided for Claim 11 as they cite the same claim limitations.

10. As per Claim 12, Terada discloses the television (TV) receiver of claim 9, wherein the history inquiry request received from the user includes *a user selection of at least one slave device*, and the displayed operation history data includes a list of operations or events performed *by each selected slave device* during a predetermined period of time (Figure 5, 7A, 7B, & 7C & 8B) [col 5, lines 4-28].

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11. As per Claim 13, Terada discloses the television (TV) receiver of claim 9, wherein the history inquiry request received from the user includes *a user selection of a period of time*, and the displayed operation history data includes a list of operations or events performed *by each slave device* during the selected period of time. (Figure 5, 7A, 7B, & 7C & 8B) [col 5, lines 4-28].

12. As per Claim 18, Terada discloses the method of claim 15, wherein the operation status data included in each response signal includes data indicating a current operation status of a slave device (Fig. 7B & 8B).

13. As per Claim 21, Terada discloses the method of claim 15, wherein the operation status data included in each response signal includes information indicating that there is no operation in progress [col 6, lines 4-19].

14. As per Claim 22, Terada discloses the method of claim 15, wherein the history inquiry request received from the user includes *a user selection of at least one slave device* [col 5, lines 4-28] and the displayed data includes a list of operations or events performed *by each selected slave device* during a predetermined period of time (Figure 5, 7A, 7B, & 7C & 8B).

15. As per Claim 23, Terada discloses the method of claim 15, wherein the history inquiry request received from the user includes *a user selection of a period of time*, and

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the displayed operation history data includes a list of operations or events performed by *each slave device* during the selected period of time (Figure 5, 7A, 7B, & 7C & 8B).

16. As per Claim 25, Terada discloses the method of claim 15, wherein the user manually makes the history inquiry request by activating a corresponding function key provided within the master device [col 14, lines 21-28] [col 17, lines 39-41].

17. As per Claim 26, Terada discloses the method of claim 15, wherein sending one status request signals to the plurality of slave devices is performed repeatedly [col 2, lines 16-44].

18. As per Claim 28, Terada discloses the home network system of claim 1, wherein the at least one slave device is configured to respond to the status request signal from the master device by sending to the master device the response signal that indicates that the at least one slave device is idle [Figs. 30, 31, 32a-b, 34, 37-40].

19. As per Claims 29 and 31, Terada discloses the television (TV) receiver of claim 9, wherein the response signals from a particular slave device of the plurality of slave devices indicates that the particular slave device is idle [Figs. 30, 31, 32a-b, 34, 37-40].

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 7, 14, and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Terada et al in view of Klosterman et al (hereinafter Klosterman), U.S. Patent Publication US 200/0092017A1.

3. As per Claim 7, Terada in view of Klosterman discloses the home network system of claim 1, wherein the master device includes a capability to activate a message BLOCK function which prevents messages sent from the at least on slave device from being displayed, and

wherein the memory *cumulatively* stores the operation status data included in each response signal, regardless of whether a message BLOCK function of the master device is currently activated or not.

Terada discloses as his invention a communication network in which a plurality of equipments each having a function implementing unit having a plurality of functions and

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a communication control unit having communication function communicating with each other, the communication control unit including a recording medium and stores on the recording medium in advance a plurality of pieces of function information related to at least on function held by the corresponding function implementing unit, and inquires function information of each of other equipments at the time of communication.

Management and functions of the various equipments can be efficiently controlled [Abstract] [col 2, lines 17-49]. But while Terada discloses substantial features of the invention, such as the home network system described in claim 1, he does not expressly disclose wherein the master device includes a capability to activate a message BLOCK function which prevents messages sent from the at least on slave device from being displayed, and wherein the memory *cumulatively* stores the operation status data included in each response signal, regardless of whether a message BLOCK function of the master device is currently activated or not.

This limitation is taught by Klosterman in his invention relating to television systems, and in particular, to the interception of television programming signals tuned by a television and the replacement or overlay of said tuned television programming signals with alternative video and/or audio programming and/or with graphics and/or text [0002]. In particular, Klosterman discloses an audio blocking bit (ABB) or video blocking bit (VBB) wherein a user may activate an electronic program guide. The EPG checks the VBB of the channel table entry of the channel currently tuned, and in one embodiment, if the VBB channel is set "on" then the EPG display is adjusted to

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completely cover the screen, and the show being viewed or displayed is completely blocked out [0061] [Figs. 2a-b, 3, 4a-b]. It is noted here by the Examiner that Klosterman's disclosures allows television programming signals to be received or stored in the receiver device while the display of the signal is blocked from view or replaced with alternative graphics and/or text.

It would therefore be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine and/or modify Terada's invention, with the feature of a master device that includes a capability to activate a message BLOCK function which prevents messages sent from the at least on slave device from being displayed, and wherein the memory *cumulatively* stores the operation status data included in each response signal, regardless of whether a message BLOCK function of the master device is currently activated or not, as disclosed by Klosterman, for the motivation of blocking out undesired or unwanted television signal programs (i.e., commercials and advertisements) according to viewer preferences [0003-0006].

Claims 14 and 27 are also rejected using the same rationale for Claim 7 given that they are identical claims that differ only by statutory category.

4. Claims 8, 10, 24, and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Terada et al in view of Aizu et al (hereinafter Aizu), U.S. Patent US 6,838,978.

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5. As per Claims 8 and 10, Terada in view of Aizu notes the home network system of claim 1, wherein the microprocessor and the at least one slave device are connected together through Power Line Communication (PLC) modems.

Terada discloses as his invention a communication network in which a plurality of equipments each having a function implementing unit having a plurality of functions and a communication control unit having communication function communicating with each other, the communication control unit including a recording medium and stores on the recording medium in advance a plurality of pieces of function information related to at least on function held by the corresponding function implementing unit, and inquires function information of each of other equipments at the time of communication.

Management and functions of the various equipments can be efficiently controlled [Abstract] [col 2, lines 17-49]. But while Terada discloses substantial features of the invention, such as the home network system described in claim 1, he does not expressly disclose wherein the microprocessor and the at least one slave device are connected together through Power Line Communication (PLC) modems 1 (Aizu: Figure 1; Col 5, lines 38-42).

The limitation is taught by Aizu in his invention of a communication system (e.g. home network system) using an electric power line and particularly relates to data collecting technology on electric household appliances in electric power line communications (PLC) at home [Abstract] [col 1, lines 5-10] [col 1, lines 46-52]. In

particular, Aizu discloses a microprocessor and a plurality of slave devices connected via a Power Line communication modem (i.e. Controller 1, which may be a PLC gateway for protocol conversion and for acquiring various kinds of appliance data *regularly* from appliances on the network [col 5, lines 38-42].

It would therefore be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine and/or modify Terada's invention, with the feature of a home network system wherein the microprocessor and the at least one slave device are connected together through Power Line Communication (PLC) modems, as disclosed by Aizu, for the motivation of allowing a display terminal to acquire appliance data from each appliance regularly and complement the non-collected appliance data at the time of startup and regularly from the control device [col 2, lines 32-36].

Claim 10 is also rejected for the same reasons cited for Claim 8 given that they are identical claims that differ only by statutory category.

6. As per Claim 24, Terada in view of Aizu discloses the method of claim 15, wherein the user automatically makes the history inquiry request by turning the power of a master device on.

Terada discloses as his invention a communication network in which a plurality of equipments each having a function implementing unit having a plurality of functions and

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a communication control unit having communication function communicating with each other, the communication control unit including a recording medium and stores on the recording medium in advance a plurality of pieces of function information related to at least on function held by the corresponding function implementing unit, and inquires function information of each of other equipments at the time of communication.

Management and functions of the various equipments can be efficiently controlled [Abstract] [col 2, lines 17-49]. But while Terada discloses substantial features of the invention, such as the home network system described in claim 1, he does not expressly disclose wherein the user automatically makes the history inquiry request by turning the power of a master device on.

The limitation is taught by Aizu in his invention of a communication system (e.g. home network system) using an electric power line and particularly relates to data collecting technology on electric household appliances in electric power line communications (PLC) at home [Abstract] [col 1, lines 5-10] [col 1, lines 46-52]. In particular, the user automatically makes the history inquiry request by turning the power of a master device on (Aizu: Col 19, lines 44-53).

It would therefore be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine and/or modify Terada's invention, with the feature of the method wherein the user automatically makes the history inquiry request by turning the power of a master device on, as disclosed by Aizu, for the motivation of allowing a display

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terminal to acquire appliance data from each appliance regularly and complement the non-collected appliance data at the time of startup and regularly from the control device [col 2, lines 32-36].

7. As per Claim 30, Terada in view of Aizu discloses the method of claim 15, wherein the steps of sending the status request signals and receiving the response signals are performed using a PLC modem.

Terada discloses as his invention a communication network in which a plurality of equipments each having a function implementing unit having a plurality of functions and a communication control unit having communication function communicating with each other, the communication control unit including a recording medium and stores on the recording medium in advance a plurality of pieces of function information related to at least on function held by the corresponding function implementing unit, and inquires function information of each of other equipments at the time of communication.

Management and functions of the various equipments can be efficiently controlled [Abstract] [col 2, lines 17-49]. But while Terada discloses substantial features of the invention, such as the home network system described in claim 1, he does not expressly wherein the steps of sending the status request signals and receiving the response signals are performed using a PLC modem.

The limitation is taught by Aizu in his invention of a communication system (e.g. home network system) using an electric power line and particularly relates to data collecting technology on electric household appliances in electric power line communications (PLC) at home [Abstract] [col 1, lines 5-10] [col 1, lines 46-52]. In particular, Aizu discloses a microprocessor and a plurality of slave devices connected via a Power Line communication modem (i.e. Controller 1, which may be a PLC gateway for protocol conversion and for acquiring various kinds of appliance data *regularly* from appliances on the network [col 5, lines 38-42].

It would therefore be obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine and/or modify Terada's invention, with the feature of wherein the steps of sending the status request signals and receiving the response signals are performed using a PLC modem, as disclosed by Aizu, for the motivation of allowing a display terminal to acquire appliance data from each appliance regularly and complement the non-collected appliance data at the time of startup and regularly from the control device [col 2, lines 32-36].

Conclusion

1. The Examiner has cited particular columns and line numbers in the references applied to the claims above for the convenience of the applicant. Although the specified

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citations are representative of the teachings of the art and are applied to specific limitations within the individual claim, other passages and figures may apply as well. It is respectfully requested from the applicant in preparing responses, to fully consider the references in entirety as potentially teaching all or part of the claimed invention, as well as the context of the passage as taught by the prior art or disclosed by the Examiner.

2. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure:

- Dewa Patent No.: US 6987513
Graphical User Interface Utilizing a Plurality of Node Processing Means for View/Drawing including Analysis, Selection, Display Control, View Generation and Re-Generation
- Hancock et al Patent Publication No.: US 2004/0128681
V-Chip Plus +: In-Guide User Interface Apparatus and Method for Programmable Blocking of Television and other Viewable Programming, such as for Parental Control of a Television Receiver

3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Glenford Madamba whose telephone number is 571-272-7989. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30-5:00.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Zarni Maung can be reached on 571-272-3939. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Khanh Dinh
Primary Examiner

Glenford Madamba
Examiner
Art Unit 2151